

# Wisconsin Forestry Notes

June 2006

Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry

## Emerald ash borer found just south of Wisconsin border

*Concern about the emerald ash borer has grown following the recent discovery of the invasive pest in Illinois. Hearings to consider a permanent rule restricting firewood at state campgrounds are scheduled for July 5th.*

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was found in a western suburb of Chicago in early June giving greater urgency to the DNR's efforts to prevent entry of firewood from distant sources onto our state lands. The emergency rule prohibiting entry of firewood from out-of-state has been in effect since April. Only 27 confiscations of firewood have been necessary, however, due to the effectiveness of our camper notification process and other public outreach efforts. During the registration process, all campers are told of the firewood restrictions, they receive a reminder with their confirmation and out-of-state visitors are sent a postcard as an extra reminder. DNR also ran a radio spot on ten stations in the Chicago area in the three days prior to the Memorial Day weekend to raise awareness of our firewood restrictions and will repeat this effort in the three days prior to the 4th of July weekend. Once visitors arrive, we are providing educational programs at many of our park and state forest campgrounds on the risk firewood poses in the transmission of pests and diseases including the EAB. These presentations also provide an opportunity to inform the public about the tighter restrictions on firewood being proposed for the permanent rule which goes to public hearings on July 5th. The permanent rule would restrict allowable firewood to that which came from within 50 miles of the campground in which it would be used. Out-of-state firewood would still be prohibited. Public hearings will be held at UW video conference sites in Wausau, Green Bay and Madison at 7:00 pm on July 5. Written comments can also be submitted at [dnrforestryrules@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:dnrforestryrules@dnr.state.wi.us) (please include "firewood" in the subject line) or can be faxed to [Andrea Diss-Torrance](mailto:Andrea.Diss-Torrance@dnr.state.wi.us) at 608-267-8576. Visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/Forestry/FH/Ash/index.htm> or <http://www.emeraldashborer.info/> to learn more about the emerald ash borer.

## Department to define forestry management practices

*The Department of Natural Resources has been legislatively directed to define "generally accepted forestry management practices." Details about the process will be announced soon.*

2005 Wisconsin Act 79, enacted by the Wisconsin Legislature in late December, provides that a forestry operation may not be declared a nuisance if it conforms to generally accepted forestry management practices. Additionally, a zoning ordinance may not prohibit forestry operations that are in accordance with generally accepted forestry management practices. Act 79 requires the Department of Natural Resources to define by rule "generally accepted forestry management practices." The Department will be requesting permission at the June meeting of the Natural Resources Board to conduct public hearings later this summer to begin this process. The legislation allows the Department to incorporate into the definition, by reference, the most recent version of the Department's publication called [Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines](#). Therefore, DNR is also proposing a process, with public input, for updating those guidelines. The contact for this effort is [Carmen Wagner](#), 608-266-1667.

*Invasive species information:  
<http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/>  
<http://invasivespecies.wi.gov/awareness/>*

## June is Invasive Species Awareness Month

## Division of Forestry addresses invasive plant issues

*Invasive plants pose a serious threat to Wisconsin forests, as outlined in a DNR study report. The Department is establishing an invasives plant program to address these issues.*

Invasive plants are an emerging issue in forestry and the Division of Forestry Leadership Team reviewed a [Program Feasibility Study - Invasive Plants in Forests](#) at a recent meeting. Aggressive non-native species are currently impacting forest regeneration in many parts of the state, and potentially harmful species continue to arrive. The importance of invasive plant issues led to the formation of a task group on invasive species and the development of this report and a set of recommendations, some of which call for agency actions. The study team was charged to: 1) examine the invasive plants issue as it affects forest resources within the state; 2) document the current level of resource damage, based on occurrence information and observations of field staff; 3) summarize conditions, and identify trends and potential threats; 4) identify actions currently being taken by Forestry Division and other forest managers, and determine what additional efforts are needed; and 5) develop a proposed program and plan for addressing invasive plant issues. The Forestry Division did not have a formalized program for addressing invasive plants, but the threat to forest resources and the growing level of interest from external groups warrants examining our current efforts in this area, and the feasibility of Forestry Division's role in the management of invasive plant species. The Forestry Leadership Team agreed to formalize an invasives plant program to be led by a coordinator position and approved the establishment of a working group. Visit the DNR Web site to read the complete [study report](#) as well as other [publications](#) that describe some of the species threatening Wisconsin forests. For more information, contact [Eunice Padley](#) at 608-261-6459.

## Spring fire season wraps up

*Thanks to the preparedness of our staff and the cooperation of Mother Nature, Wisconsin's 2006 spring fire season was fairly quiet.*

The 2006 fire season began with an ongoing effort of support for the State of Texas, which experienced extreme drought and unprecedented fires. Six Wisconsin engine-tractor/plow units were there and were staffed for four 2-week periods from December through February. We also provided some assistance to Oklahoma, which was experiencing similar, though somewhat less acute, circumstances.

As the snow melted and the cured fuels began to dry out in the spring sun, those units all came home in anticipation of our own fire season. Dry conditions from last year and through the winter set the stage for a potentially bad fire season. But continually throughout the spring, whenever the weather started to become acute, a damp weather pattern would occur and curtail fire activity. On those days with serious fire potential we were able to contain any fires that occurred before they approached the catastrophic level of last year's [Cottonville Fire](#).

The worst of fire season is behind us, and our protection areas experienced just over 900 fires for about 1,550 acres. This is somewhat below our average and is indicative both of the excellent work of our field personnel and some well-timed assistance from cooperators, especially the State of Minnesota, which helped by providing two suppression aircraft on a potentially bad fire situation in northwestern Wisconsin in April.

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**"Wisconsin Forestry Notes" is a monthly electronic publication highlighting programs and activities of the Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry, Box 7921, Madison, Wisconsin 53707**  
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